

Unit - 1

Two Gentlemen of Verona

1. Answer the following Questions in one or two sentences each based on your understanding of the story.

Question (a)

Who did the narrator meet at the outskirts of Verona?

Answer:

The narrator met the brothers Nicola and Jacopo on the outskirts of Verona.

Question (b)

Why did the driver not approve of the narrator buying fruits from the boys?

Answer:

The fruit vendors were shabby in their appearance. So, the driver did not approve of the narrator's idea of buying fruits from them.

Question (c)

The boys did not spend much on clothes and food. Why?

Answer:

1. The boys were in need of money for the treatment of their sister.
2. So they did not spend much on clothes and food.

Question (d)

Were the boys saving money to go to the States? How do you know?

Answer:

No, the boys did not save the money to go to States. The boys themselves admit that they have other plans.

Question (e)

Why did the author avoid going to Lucia's room?

Answer:

The author did not want to disturb the privacy of the family party and the sense of pride the boys had in supporting their elder sister.

Question (f)

What was Lucia suffering from?

Answer:

Lucia was suffering from tuberculosis of the spine.

Question (g)

What made the boys join the resistance movement against the Germans?

Answer:

The boys hated the Germans who had destroyed their town and killed their father. So, they joined the resistance movement against the Germans.

Question (h)

What made the boys work so hard?

Answer:

Their desire to save the life of their sister made the boys work so hard.

Question (i)

Why didn't the boys disclose their problem to the author?

Answer:

The little boys did not want sympathy but any work which would fetch them money. So, they did not disclose their problem to the author.

2. Answer the following Questions in three or four sentences each.

Question (a)

Describe the appearance of Nicola and Jacopo.

Answer:

1. Nicola and Jacopo had a shabby appearance.
2. One had worn a jersey and cut off khaki pants. The other had shortened army tunic gathered in loose folds.
3. They had brown skins, tangled hair, and dark earnest eyes.

Question (b)

What were the various jobs undertaken by the little boys?

Answer:

The little boys sold wild berries. They shined shoes. They showed visitors through the town to Juliet's tomb and other places of interest. They even booked a seat for the narrator in a theatre and got American cigars too.

Question (c)

How did the narrator help the boys on Sunday?

Answer:

1. The boys used to visit Poleta every Sunday.

2. The narrator himself drove the car for the boys to reach their destination.
3. Thus he helped the boys.

Question (d)

Who took the author to the cubicle?

Answer:

The attendant nurse who was very familiar with Nicola and Jacopo took the narrator in. She led him through a cool, tiled vestibule into the hospital, the villa had become. She left him at the door of a little cubicle from where he can watch unseen Nicola and Jacopa chatting with their ailing sister.

Question (e)

Describe the girl with whom the boys were talking to in the cubicle.

Answer:

Lucia was a girl of about twenty. She was propped up on pillows wearing a pretty lace jacket. Her eyes were soft and tender.

Question (f)

Recount the untold sufferings undergone by the siblings after they were rendered homeless.

Answer:

1. They suffered from starvation and exposure to the cold winter.
2. They barely kept themselves alive in a sort of shelter they built with their own hands amidst the rubble.

Question (g)

The narrator did not utter a word and preferred to keep the secret to himself. Why? Substantiate the statement with reference to the story.

Answer:

After coming out of the hospital the boys sat beside the narrator. Throughout the 30 km ride, they did not say a word. The narrator did not say a word because he wanted the boys to feel that their sacrifice and suffering remained a secret. However, the narrator was touched by the devotion of the little boys.

3. Answer the following in a paragraph of 100-150 words each.

Question (a)

What was the driving force that made the boys do various jobs?

Answer:

The boys lost their mother in their early life. Their father, a well-known singer became a victim of the early war against Germany. They became homeless and suffered starvation

and cold winter. They led a pathetic life. After the war, they found their sister. They could not feel happy because she was suffering from tuberculosis of the spine.

The boys were the only family for their sister. They felt that it was their duty to make arrangements for her medical treatment. They were not rich enough to spend on medical expenses but they had an optimistic view to save their sister in one way or the other. This was the driving force that made the boys do various jobs.

Question (b)

How was the family affected by the war?

Answer:

Before the war, Nicola and Jacopo's widowed father was a well-known singer. He was killed in the early part of the war leaving Lucia, his daughter behind to take care of the little boys. Shortly after a bomb destroyed their home. The three children were thrown into the streets. They had always known a comfortable and cultured life. Lucia was training to become a singer. Suddenly they were uprooted from their cozy life. They had suffered from near starvation and exposure to cold winter. The home they rebuilt from the rubbles was not weather-proof. The boys joined the secret services of resistance moment as they hated Germans. When they returned home after the war, they found their sister affected by tuberculosis of the spine. They persuaded a private hospital to take Lucia in. Every week they worked hard to pay for their sister's medical expenses. To achieve it they had to sacrifice a lot.

Question (c)

Write a character sketch of Nicola and Jacopo.

Answer:

Nicola and Jacopo were two brothers who were 13 and 12 years respectively. They belonged to the city of Verona in Italy. They were childish and innocent. Jacopo was lively as a squirrel. Nicola was steady and engaging. They were engaged in different works to earn money which shows that they were hard working. Though they were young they were mature enough to understand the situation.

They were quite focused on their goal of earning money for the treatment of their sister. They didn't even care about themselves which shows their care and understanding for their sister. Nicola was very cautious in keeping his secret. In fact, he did not like to get any help from anyone. They were honest and truthful. They carried family values of love, care, and sacrifice. In fact, one can find hope for human society in their characters.

Question (d)

What message is conveyed through the story 'Two Gentlemen of Verona'?

Answer:

Adversity is a touchstone of virtue. Both the little boys resemble tea leaves. Their best essence comes to limelight when they find themselves in hot waters. But they don't complain. One does not give up on family relations when misfortune strikes. The bond

becomes strong as the bond demands selfless sacrifice. The nobility of human life emerges from the precious lessons one learns from the supreme sacrifices of Nicola and Jacopo. One who shoulders the responsibility of taking care of loved ones, irrespective of age, is an exemplary gentleman worthy of emulation. The primary motivational force of an individual is to find meaning in life. Both the little boys had a specific purpose for their life. They had made up their minds to do whatever work possible to earn money to save their sister and restore her singing career.

Question (e)

Justify the title of the story 'Two Gentlemen of Verona'.

Answer:

The two boys Nicola and Jacopo were kind and caring towards their sister. They were very polite towards others. At their young age itself, they were ready to shoulder responsibilities without any hesitation. They behaved in a mature way which gets revealed by the fact that they were not ready to accept others feeling of sympathy towards them. So they maintained their secrecy in a perfect way till the end.

They never lose hope. They didn't even bother about their own personal appearance in their run towards earning money. They were ready to do all kinds of odd jobs to achieve their goal. Even in that situation they did not choose the wrong path. With all these qualities the two boys can be rightly called gentlemen. Thus the title gets justified.

Question (f)

Adversity brings out the best as well as the worst in people. Elucidate this statement with reference to the story.

Answer:

Whenever confronted by adversity, there is a psychological reaction among most of us. Either fight or flee from it. Even adults run away from crisis and seek asylum or support of others. We find hordes of people, when living becomes difficult, migrate to other places to survive. In the face of adversity, even educated people turn to evil ways. They worked hard from dawn to midnight. They did any job that came their way. They shined shoes, hawked newspapers, sold wild fruits and took the people round the city. They spent very little on their food and clothes. Every week they cycled to Poleta and paid Lucia's medical bill systematically. In this story, the nurse of the private hospital reveals the bitter truth about the economy of Verona. Jobs are scarce. There is inflation. It is difficult to buy food with limited money. When the hospital laid the condition that the little boys Nicola and Jacopo should pay the weekly medical bill for their sister Lucia's treatment for tuberculosis, they did not back off or give up. Their best qualities came out during adversity. Like tea leaves, they gave their best while in hot waters.

Question (g)

Which character do you like the most in the story and why?

Answer:

The character whom I like the most in the story is the Narrator. He is a keen observer and a

very sensitive person. He tries to see the sorrow and joy beyond the shabby appearance of the boys. This shows his good humanity. He is both kind-hearted and has the tendency to help others, which is proved by his behaviour of driving the boys to Poleta himself.

In spite of the warning given by his driver he truly admires the gentlemanly attitude of the shabbily dressed boys. He never likes to intrude in the privacy of the boys. Even after knowing about their sister, he doesn't utter a word and gives them the pleasure that they had succeeded in keeping their secret. In fact, the narrator himself can be called a perfect gentleman.

Vocabulary

(a) Read the following words taken from the story. Give two synonyms and one antonym for each of these words. Use a dictionary, if required.

Word	Synonyms	Antonym
cautious		
disapprove		
brisk		
engaging		
humble		
eager		
resistance		
persuade		
scarce		
nobility		

Answer:

S. No.	Word	Synonyms	Antonym
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1.	cautious	careful	alert	reckless
2.	disapprove	express dislike	object to	approve
3.	brisk	swift	fast	sloppy
4.	engaging	charming	agreeable	repulsive
5.	humble	meeek	submissive	proud
6.	eager	anxious	impatient	apathetic
7.	resistance	opposition	hostility	acceptance
8.	persuade	convince	induce	dissuade
9.	scarce	scant	insufficient	plentiful
10.	nobility	virtue	goodness	dishonour

(b) Homophones and Confusables

Question 1.

Given below is a list of common confusables. Distinguish the meaning of each pair of words by framing your own sentences.

Answer:

(a) emigrate (leaving homeland) – immigrate (come to live permanently in a foreign country)

Priyanka Chopra does not wish to emigrate to the UK where her husband is living.

Candidates who wish to immigrate to the USA are increasing in number every year.

(b) beside (at the side of) – besides (in addition to)

I remember keeping my watch beside my glasses.

Besides supporting terrorist outfits within its borders, Pakistan claims innocence in the Pulwama attack.

(c) judicial (relating to justice) – judicious (wise/prudent)

The fraudsters who swindled the money of an IT personnel in Navalur through ATM were taken into judicial custody.

Kalpna reacted judiciously when she realized that a mobile thief was standing next to her.

(d) eligible (Adj.- satisfying the appropriate conditions) – illegible (Adj.- not clear enough to be read)

Even at the age of 30, Vinod is an eligible bachelor for the manager post.

Priya's handwriting is illegible.

(e) conscience (a person's moral sense of right and wrong) – conscious (being aware of) "Conscience makes cowards of us all", said Shakespeare.

The lorry driver was conscious of the dangers involved in carrying the explosives in his truck.

(f) industrial (relating to industry) – industrious (diligent/hardworking)

Perungudi is an industrial block.

Man should be as industrious as ants and bees.

(g) eminent (famous) – imminent (something bad likely to happen very soon)

Every eminent scientist has an unseen past in which he must have struggled to prove his theory or inventions to the world.

Environmentalists are apprehensive of the imminent earthquakes in mega multipurpose projects' catchment areas as they fall under seismicity-prone areas.

(h) illicit (adj- illegal) – elicit (v – to evoke a response)

Two hundred miners perished after consuming illicit liquor in Bihar.

The police personnel tried to elicit the truth about the murder of the schoolgirl in a pump set from the arrested relative and three other culprits.

(i) prescribed (set down rules) – proscribed (prohibited)

The students were advised to follow the guidelines prescribed by the Directorate of Government Examinations.

The tourists were proscribed from taking selfies from the suicide point in Kodaikanal.

(j) affect (to influence something or someone) – effect (result/impact of something)

The athlete did not imagine that a steroid shot might affect his sports career adversely.

The rising number of cybercrimes proves the adverse effect of educated unemployment.

(k) aural (relating to hearing) – oral (verbal)

In primary schools, teachers must assess the aural skills of children.

There must be a fool-proof mechanism to assess the oral skills of students at the secondary level, especially in languages.

(l) born (related to birth) – borne (carried by)

Divya was not born with a silver spoon in her mouth.

The entire village paid homage to army personnel, U. Saravanan's body which was borne in a decorated coffin by military soldiers and home guards.

Question 2.

Fill in the blanks with suitable homophones or confusables

wallet		hoard	
fairy		desert	
medal		night	
wait		sweet	
yoke		plain	
grown		might	
earn		quite	

Answer:

wallet	valet	hoard	horde
fairy	ferry	desert	dessert
medal	meddle	night	knight
wait	weight	sweet	sweat
yoke	yolk	plain	plane
grown	groan	might	mite
earn	yearn	quite	quiet

(c) Give the meanings of the following phrasal verbs and frame sentences using them.

Question 1.

cut off: block the way

Answer:

The village was cut off due to floods.

Question 2.

come upon: to meet or encounter unexpectedly

Answer:

I came upon an old friend in the street today.

Question 3.

put out: extinguish

Answer:

The firemen put out the fire after a struggle of six hours.

Question 4.

draw up : halt

Answer:

Ram drew up his car on seeing the red signal.

Question 5.

pass out: become unconscious

Answer:

The college student who fell down from the bus passed out and an ambulance was called.

Question 6.

take off: leave the ground

Answer:

The plane took off two hours late from Delhi due to fog.

Question 7.

turn away: move one's face away

Answer:

Whenever I find able-bodied men and women beg in the trains, I turn away.

Question 8.

stand by: ready to substitute

Answer:

The eleventh player was standing by to play if any player gets hurt or a substitute is needed.

Question 9.

bank on: rely on confidently

Answer:

We can always bank on our English teacher whenever a debate is announced.

Prefixes and Suffixes

(d) Read the list of words formed by adding suffixes.

frequently	satisfaction	willingness
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comfortable

resemblance

nobility

Form two derivatives from each of the following words by adding prefixes and suffixes.

Word	Prefix	Suffix
patient	<i>impatient</i>	<i>patiently</i>
honour		
respect		
manage		
fertile		
different		
friend		
obey		

Answer:

Word	Prefix	Suffix
patient	impatient	patiently
honour	dishonour	honourable
respect	disrespect	respectable
manage	mismanage	management
fertile	infertile	fertility
different	indifferent	differently
friend	befriend	friendly
obey	disobey	obedience

Listening Activity

Floods are an inevitable natural disaster which can occur in any part of the world. Floods can prove all the more disastrous in localities, where population density is high. Preparation for Disaster Management has become imperative for any city, town or village during monsoons. The Government Department entrusted with Disaster Management makes periodic announcements about the precautions to be taken whenever floods are anticipated.

Now, you are going to listen to the cautionary instructions that are given to the general public living in flood-prone areas. Listen carefully and complete the following sentences. For the attention of the public, here is an announcement from the Department of Disaster Management. As per the warning issued today by the Meteorological Department, there exists a high probability of a widespread heavy downpour from the early hours of Sunday and consequent flooding of low-lying areas. In order to ensure the safety of life and property, everyone is hereby warned and advised to take certain precautionary measures:

- First of all, prepare a household flood plan and be ready to respond to the situation.
 - Find out the locations of the closest flood shelters available and routes to reach them.
 - Maintain an emergency kit comprising water bottles, biscuit packets, medical supplies, a torchlight, and a whistle to signal for help.
 - Paste or fix a list of emergency telephone numbers on the wall in a visible spot.
 - Switch off hazardous items like gas cylinders and disconnect electrical gadgets.
 - Secure important personal documents and valuables in a waterproof case and place them in an accessible location.
 - Place small pieces of furniture and clothing on tables and cots.
 - Shift all the small objects safely to the loft.
 - Empty your refrigerators and leave their doors open to avoid damage in case they float.
 - Charge your mobile phones as well as your battery banks so as to communicate with friends, relatives, and emergency services.
 - Place sandbags in the toilet bowls and bathroom drain holes to prevent sewage inflow.
 - Prepare and pack food with a long shelf life.
 - Finally, listen to the periodic news updates through your portable communication devices and follow the instructions implicitly.
1. The announcement was made by the Department of _____
 2. Widespread heavy rains are expected from the early hours of _____
 3. The public is asked to find out the locations of _____
 4. An emergency kit should contain water bottles, biscuit packets, and a _____
 5. A list of _____ should be displayed on the wall.
 6. Important documents can be secured by keeping them in a _____ case.

7. Damage to refrigerators can be avoided by _____
8. Mobile phones should be charged to enable the marooned to contact their friends, relatives and _____
9. _____ should be placed in the toilet bowls to prevent sewage inflow.
10. Listen to the _____ and follow the instructions implicitly.

Answer:

1. Disaster Management
2. Sunday
3. closest flood shelters
4. whistle
5. emergency telephone numbers
6. waterproof
7. emptying refrigerators and leaving their doors open
8. emergency services
9. Sandbags
10. periodic news updates

Speaking Activity

Task 1

On the occasion of World Environment Day, you have been asked to deliver a speech during morning assembly on the importance of tree planting. Write the speech in about 100 -150 words.

- Introduction
- Suggested value points
- Pollution control – Medicine – Necessary for wildlife – Cause rainfall
- Conclusion

Respected Principal, chief guest, and dignitaries on the dais and off the dais.

Good evening. I am immensely delighted to speak to you on World Environment Day. All of you know that we celebrate Environment Day on 5th June, every year, let me explain why we celebrate World Environment Day. The relationship between humanity and the environment is a delicate balance. Since the industrial revolution, the world's population has increased exponentially. With population growth, the environment has been profoundly affected. Deforestation, pollution, and global climatic changes are amongst the adverse effects the explosive population and technological expansion have introduced. The main objective of Environment Day is to gain a greater understanding of the environment. This enhanced awareness, I believe, will help the country reduce carbon footprints, increase the use of solar power, reduce and recycle non-biodegradable waste and evolve alternative technologies which would reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

Moreover, tree planting will be done on a mission mode by school children and college students representing NCC and NSS wings. This would spread the forest cover and give shelter to the wildlife and also ensure plentiful rainfall sustaining life on this lovely planet. The student community shall disseminate the urgent need to conserve water and other natural resources. I appeal to the younger generation, I mean my friends to be socially responsive and do their part to preserve the environment.

Task 2

Prepare a speech on “The importance of a reading habit” in about 100-150 words using the hints given below together with your own ideas.

- Introduction
- Suggested value points
- Knowledge enrichment – Skill development – Meaningful usage of time – Overall development
- Conclusion

The most distinguished chief guest, revered Principal, dignitaries on the Dias, and off the dias, my beloved teachers and friends. This morning I wish to share my views on a man-making habit called ‘Reading’.

Books are the quietest and most constant of friends. They are the most accessible and wisest of counselors and the most patient of teachers. Some schools do focus on developing a flair for reading by keeping a library period. Children are allowed to borrow books and also share their observations with their peers after the library hour is over. Such sharing introduces children to the wonderful world of books. The art of reading is in great part that of acquiring a better understanding of life from one’s encounter with it in a book. Through reading, one exposes oneself to new things, new ways to solve a problem. Reading is a very useful hobby. Wisemen have lauded the importance of reading and the hobby of reading. Kofi Annan said, “Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope.”

William James said, “So it is with children who learn to read fluently and well. They begin to take flight into whole new worlds as effortlessly as young birds take to the sky.” Dear friends let us read books and conquer the world.

Reading

Read the passage given below and make notes.

To match the best cities across the world, the Government of India initiated ‘smart cities’ to drive economic growth and improve the quality of life of people. The agenda under smart city promises to resolve urban sustainability problems. Urban forests provide a range of

important ecosystem services that are critical for the sustainability of cities. Urban forestry, which is defined more as 'Management of Trees' contributes to the physiological, sociological, and economic well-being of the society. Mangroves, lakes, grasslands, and forests in and around our cities, act as sponges that absorb the air and noise pollution and they present themselves as our cultural and recreational hotspots. However, these spots are rapidly being reclaimed" and replaced in the name of development. The presence of urban green has shown to increase the economic value of the place.

Urban forests contribute to reducing the cost of building stormwater drain systems for municipalities and neutralizing the urban heat island effect. Plants not only provide shade but also help in regulating the micro-climate. They help regulate energy budgets, improve air quality, and curtail noise pollution. Trees, herbs, shrubs, and grasses arrest sedimentation and prevent other pollutants from entering our water systems. This will give a chance for our urban lakes and rivers to recover and help improve aquatic ecosystems. Biodiversity also gets a boost through the urban forests and helps create corridors connecting the forest areas. High biodiversity areas can also help to build resilient ecosystems. The availability of forests within our urban areas gives an opportunity for children to connect to the natural environment and learn about native species.

Notes

1. Agenda of smart cities

Resolve urban sustainability problems-manage trees-urban forestry-psychological and sociological well-being of society.

2. Main advantages of urban forestry

Mangroves, lakes, grasslands, and forests-sponges absorbing noise and air pollutants
Recreational hotspots-urban green-additive economic value-threat in the name of development.

3. Impact on climate

Reduce the cost of stormwater drain system-neutralize urban heat island effect-maintains I microclimate.

4. Enhancing environmental health

Regulate energy budget-air quality improved-sedimentation arrested-pollutants prevented I from entering water systems-urban lakes and rivers revive aquatic ecosystems.

5. Biodiversity

Biodiversity enhanced-resilient ecosystems developed-children get connected to the natural environment.

Grammar

Tenses

Task 1

Tick the correct options and complete the dialogue.

1. A: Hello. What do you watch/are you watching?
2. B: A programme about the Jillian Wala Bagh massacre, which I recorded last night. I study /I'm studying about it this term.
3. A: All that I know / I've known about it is that hundreds of people died/had died in it.
4. B: Yes, it was much, much worse than anyone has expected/had expected. It went on / has gone on for hours. Do you want / Have you wanted to watch the programme with me?
5. A: No, thanks. I've got to do some veena practice. I've just remembered /I just remembered that we've got a concert tomorrow, and I don't have/haven't had time to practice my new piece this week.
6. B: OK. I've already done /I already did my practice, so I've got time to watch TV. See you later.

Answer:

1. are you watching
2. I'm studying
3. I've known, had died
4. had expected, went on, Do you want
5. I've just remembered, haven't had
6. I already did

Task 2

Complete the sentences with the correct tense form of the verbs in brackets.

1. _____ (tell) me exactly what _____ (happen) last night!
2. Mrs. Mageswari is my Maths teacher. She _____ (teach) me for four years.
3. I _____ (never /think) of a career in medicine before I spoke to my Biology teacher but now I (seriously/ consider) it.
4. Oh no! I _____ (forget) to bring my assignment! What am I going to do? This is the second time I (do) this!
5. I can't remember what my teacher _____ (say) yesterday about our homework. I (not listen) properly because Hussain (talk) to me at the same time.
6. Last year we _____ (go) on a school trip to Kanyakumari. We (have) a very interesting time.

7. At the moment I _____ (think) about what course to pursue next year but I (not make) a final decision yet.
8. I _____ (get) up at 7 every morning but this morning I (sleep) for a long time and I _____ (not get) up until 8.

Answer:

1. Tell, happened
2. has been teaching
3. never thought, am seriously considering it
4. forgot, have done
5. said, was not listening, was talking
6. went, had
7. am thinking, have not made
8. get, slept, did not get

Task 3

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verbs given in the brackets.

1. Everyone _____ when the earthquake hit the small town, (sleep)
2. Evangeline _____ her job a couple of years ago. (quit)
3. Where _____ your last holidays? (you spend)
4. I think Suresh _____ for Tiruvallur next morning, (leave)
5. I was angry that I _____ such a mistake (make).
6. My mother was tired yesterday because she _____ well the night before (not sleep).
7. Her parents _____ in Coimbatore for two weeks from today (be).
8. Nothing much _____ when I got to the meeting (happen).
9. Scientists predict that by 2050, man _____ on Mars, (land)
10. Sh! Someone _____ to our conversation! (listen)
11. The plane _____ off in a few minutes, (take)
12. They _____ about me when I interrupted their conversation, (talk)
13. Justin and his parents _____ in an apartment right now because they can't find a cheap house, (live)
14. Rajini Prem's family _____ in Chengalpet now. (be).
15. Yusuf _____ to the movies once in a while (go)
16. This _____ an easy quiz so far (be).
17. Our team _____ any games last year, (not win)
18. We _____ a wonderful film at the cinema last night, (see)
19. Hurry up! The movie _____ (already begin)

Answer:

1. was sleeping
2. had quit
3. did you spend
4. left
5. had made
6. had not slept
7. will be
8. had happened
9. will land
10. is listening
11. will take
12. were talking
13. are living
14. is
15. goes
16. has been
17. did not win
18. saw
19. may have already begun

Modal Auxiliaries

Task 1

Fill in the blanks with modal auxiliaries.

1. The candidates _____ **Answer** five out of ten **Questions**.
2. How _____ you open my bag?
3. Tajudeen _____ finish this work by Monday.
4. _____ I go to school today?
5. I wish you _____ tell me the truth.
6. Poonam _____ not catch the bus yesterday.
7. People who live in glass houses _____ not throw stones.
8. You _____ not go to the market as I have brought vegetables.
9. _____ you have taken all this trouble?
10. You _____ be joking.
11. I tried to climb up the tree, but _____ not.
12. Hima Das ran so fast that she _____ win the medal.
13. You _____ lead a horse to water, but you make it drink.
14. I _____ like to have a cup of coffee.
15. My grandfather _____ visit this temple when he was young.

Answer:

1. should
2. dare

3. can
4. May
5. could
6. could
7. should
8. need
9. Should
10. must
11. could
12. could
13. can, can't
14. would
15. used to

Task 2

Complete the following sentences with modals using the clues given.

1. You _____ help the needy, (moral obligation)
2. If I were you, I _____ not behave like that, (conditional sentence)
3. I _____ never tell a lie. (determination)
4. My uncle _____ have reached by now. (possibility)
5. To play hockey when I was a student, (past habit)
6. You do not attend my class, (order)
7. He comes today, (remote possibility)
8. You follow the traffic rules, (regulation)
9. He plays the match, (willingness)
10. You do not waste time on it. (necessity)
11. Had the doctor come in time, he has saved the patient. (probability)

Answer:

1. ought to
2. would
3. will
4. may
5. must
6. used
7. should
8. might
9. should
10. would
11. need
12. would

Reported Speech

Task 1

Read what these people say and rewrite as sentences.

Question 1.

I am very busy.

Answer:

Raja said that he was very busy.

Question 2.

I have completed my work.

Answer:

Satya said that she had completed her work

Question 3.

I don't like to go out.

Answer:

Johnson said that he didn't like to go out

Question 4.

I have just come back from Chennai.

Answer:

Akshita said that she had just come back from Chennai

Question 5.

I am learning English.

Answer:

Jayan said that he was learning English

Question 6.

I bought a pen yesterday.

Answer:

Madhu said that she had bought a pen the previous day

Question 7.

We will go shopping tomorrow.

Answer:

Joseph and Mary said that they would go shopping the next day

Question 8.

We can't attend the party.

Answer:

Afsar and Ayesha said that they couldn't attend the party

Question 9.

How are you?

Answer:

Satish

Question 10.

I am in line. Thank you.

Answer:

Victor enquired how Victor was replied that he was fine and thanked him

Task 2

Read the following dialogue and complete the report in the space provided.

Question 1.

Priya: Where are you going to?

Vijay: I am going to the railway station.

Priya: Why are you going there?

Vijay: I want to receive my uncle who is coming from Bangalore.

Answer:

Priya asked Vijay : (a) where he was going.

Vijay replied : (b) that he was going to the railway station.

Priya further inquired : (c) why he was going there.

Vijay stated that : (d) he wanted to receive his uncle who was coming from Bangalore.

Question 2.

Teacher : Why are you late?

Divya : I missed the bus.

Teacher : You should have reached the bus stop on time.

Divya : My grandmother is ill. So, I had to take her to the doctor.

Teacher : I am sorry. What ails her?

Divya : She has high fever.

The teacher asked Divya why she was late. Divya replied that __ (a) __ The teacher told her

that __ (b) __ Divya said that her grandmother was ill so she had to take her to the doctor.

The teacher felt sorry and further asked her __ (c) __ Divya explained that she __ (d) __ high fever.

Answer:

- (a) she had missed the bus
- (b) she should have reached the bus stop on time.
- (c) what ailed her
- (d) had

Task 3

Rewrite the following passage in indirect speech.

Pradeep got out of bed with much excitement. "It is going to be a lovely sunny day," he remarked to his sister Varshini.

I "Just let me sleep a bit longer, Pradeep," Varshini begged, "and since you are feeling so enthusiastic," she suggested, "Why don't you go and help a mother in cooking?"

"Sure, I will", said Pradeep. "Can I help you, mum?", he said to his mother.

"Yes, of course. There are idlis and vadas on the dining table. Have your breakfast."

"Thank you, mum; I'll surely help you by eating them."

'Pradeep got out of his bed with much excitement and told his sister that it was going to be a lovely Sunday. Varshini requested him to let her sleep a bit longer. She added that as he was feeling so enthusiastic he should go and help his mother in cooking. Pradeep agreed readily. He asked his mom if he could help her. Mom agreed and asked him to have breakfast adding that there were idlis and vadas on the dining table. Pradeep thanked mom and said that he would surely help her by eating them.

Writing

Letter Writing

- (a) Read the following letter carefully, discuss with your partner, and answer the questions.

Sir,

I request you o publish the following letter in your daily to address an important issue which needs immediate redressal.

During weekends motorcyclists are seen racing on the East Coast Road and the Old Mahabalipuram road of Chennai. The amateur racers are risking their own lives and of the public as well. They are fearless and irresponsible, not knowing the price of human lives. Risking others and their lives for their pleasure is highly condemnable.

Even school students indulge in such activities and cause fatal accidents. The racers have started occupying the lanes and streets of busy localities. As such, the violation of traffic rules often results in the loss of young lives. Such reckless riders who violate traffic rules should be punished severely.

As a responsible citizen of society, I request the authorities concerned to take appropriate measures to put an end to this menace.

Yours truly,
Srivastav

Questions:

Question (a)

Who is the sender of the letter?

Answer:

The sender is Srivatsav

Question (b)

Who is the receiver?

Answer:

The editor of a Newspaper (unnamed).

Question (c)

What is the issue?

Answer:

Bike racing on the East Coast Road and the Old Mahabalipuram road of Chennai is the issue.

Question (d)

What is the request of the sender?

Answer:

The reckless riders who violate traffic rules must be punished. This is the request of the sender.

Question (e)

Who will take steps after reading it?

Answer:

The authorities concerned will take steps after reading it.

(b) You have chosen Computer Science in the Higher Secondary Course. Write a letter to your friend giving reasons for your choice. Read the clues given in brackets to complete the letter.

(1) ____ (Greeting),

Hope (2) ____ (enquire about his well being). I would like to (3) ____ Firstly (4) ____ (the reason for your choice of group). I wish (5) ____ (state your ambition). We come to hear (6) ____ (discuss recent unhealthy happenings in social media and society). These

have made me (7) _____ (demand or need of this profession). I have plans to pursue (8) _____ (higher studies or specialization).

All the best for your CA preparation.

Convey my (9) _____

Yours lovingly,

(your name)

Answer:

1. Dear Ram
2. you are doing fine
3. inform you that I have chosen the Computer Science stream in eleventh
4. one has to have sound knowledge of computers and without computer literacy, one can't succeed in life.
5. to become a Computer Engineer
6. cyberbullying and exploitation
7. understand the need for ethical computer engineers in tackling such issues
8. Computer Science Engineering in Anna University
9. kind regards to your parents

Task

(a) You had been to your Grandma's house during the summer holidays. You enjoyed your stay at her company. Write a letter to your Grandma stating how much you miss her after returning to your home.

Dear Grandma,

I am fine. I hope your health is fine. My stay at your house was really wonderful. You spent a lot of time with me sharing recipes for many delicious dishes. Every day you prepared curry with vegetables from your own garden. The food you gave was so tasty that I envied my mom who had spent the best part of her life with you. I just love the stories you shared every evening. Grandma, you had herbal remedies for every kind of ailment. I wish I could come again next summer and stay with you.

Yours lovingly,

Anu

To

K. Savithri

18, Mettu St.

Chengalpattu – 603001

(b) You are the head of the English department in a renowned institution. You are invited to preside over the inauguration of the

English Literary club in your alma mater. Respond to the letter you have received either accepting the invitation or expressing your inability to attend the function.

Dear Vijaya Sarathy,

Received your invitation. I am really glad to accept your invitation to inaugurate the English Literary Club in the school where I had completed my twelfth standard 15 years ago. Don't worry about sending a car. I will come in my own car. You can fix any working day in the second week of November.

With Warm

Regards Yours sincerely

Anjali

To

Vijaya Sarathy

Secretary, Literary Club

ABC HSS,

XXXX

Inability to attend the function

Dear Sarathy,

Received your invitation, I wish I could attend the inaugural meeting of the literary club. It would be such an honour as I have studied in that school. But I need to attend an international conference in Thailand. I will be away during the second and third week of October. I would recommend you to invite Dr. Sangeetha, a great scholar who has recently done her Ph.D. in Modern Poetry (i.e.) Pudhukavithai. Though she is young, she is a versatile genius and it would be appropriate if you would come and invite her in person.

Good luck with the success of the programme.

With Warm Regards Yours sincerely Anjali Head

Dept, of English

ABC College of Arts and Science Chennai – 78.

To

Vijaya Sarathy

Secretary, Literary Club

ABC HSS,

XXXX

(c) Write a letter to the Headmaster of your school requesting him to help you obtain a duplicate mark sheet of class XII, which you lost

while travelling.

From
S. Kavnilavan
18, Gangu Reddy
Egmore Chennai To
The Headmaster
Govt. HSS
Nungambakkam

Respected Sir,
Sub: Loss of Twelfth Marksheet

I completed my twelfth in your esteemed school in the year 2016-2017. My reg. no. is 98781. I lost my twelfth marksheet. I request you to kindly guide me to get a duplicate marksheet from the Directorate of Government Examinations at the earliest.

With warm regards.

Yours sincerely

S. Kavnilavan

To;

The Headmaster
Govt. HSS
Nungambakkam

(d) Write a letter to AZ Company requesting them to replace the defective juicer that you bought recently. Include the following details: the problem, date of purchase, receipt number, model, and warranty.

From
K. Manimuthu
18, East Street
Kulamangalam
To,
The Manager
A2 Company
18, Dindigul Road
Madurai

Sir,

Sub: Request to replace defective juicer-Reg.

I bought Preethi juicer mixie on 18.02.19 vide bill no. 1781. On reaching home I tried to make apple juice. The juicer rotates but the cut apples were not crushed. I believe this is a mechanical fault. Could you please replace the faulty Preethi juicer with a new one?

Photocopies of warranty card and the bill are enclosed.

Yours sincerely K. Manimuthu

To,
The Manager
A2 Company
Company
18, Dindigul Road
Madurai

(e) You wish to become a pilot. Write a letter to a college enquiring about the details of the pilot training course offered by the college. Include the following details in your enquiry: duration of the course, fee structure, scholarships, hostel facilities and placement details.

From
L. Kathiravan
17, Awaiyar St.
K.K. Nagar
Madurai – 20 To
The Principal
PTC Aviation Academy
Chromepet
Chennai – 600044

Sir,
Warm Greetings.

Sub: Enquiry about Pilot training course-Reg.

I saw your advertisement in the Indian Express newspaper about pilot training course yesterday. I would like to become a commercial pilot. Kindly clarify my doubts by answering the following Questions.

1. How long do you conduct the course for the candidates who want to become pilots?
2. What is the fee structure of the course?
3. I have 90+ marks in I Group in my +2 Board examinations. Is there any scholarship or concession in fee structure for meritorious candidates?
4. What is the success rate of placements in your institute for trained pilots?

I shall contact you in person after receiving your information-packed reply.

Yours sincerely

L. Kathiravan

To,
The Principal
PTC Aviation Academy
Chromepet
Chennai – 600044

(f) Write a letter to the manager of Waves Furniture Company ordering furniture for a coaching centre. Include the following details: description of the furniture, number of pieces, mode of payment, time and delivery options.

From
M. Usharani Coordinator
NEET Coaching Centre Government Girl's Hr. Sec. School Egmore To
The Sales Manager
Waves Furniture Company
Station Road
Nungambakkam
Chennai

Sir,

We need 100 double desks (i.e.) Desk + bench enabling four students to sit comfortably and write at a time. On receipt of the green painted iron double desks, we will make payment through cheque. Delivery can be effected only after personal verification of sample piece tailor-made for our school requirements. You can deliver the pieces before 28th July without fail.

Yours sincerely

S/d Usharani

To,

The Sales Manager
Waves Furniture Company
Station Road
Nungambakkam
Chennai

(g) Write an application for the post of Personal Secretary to the Managing Director of a company. Include the following details: Educational qualification, experience, various other qualifications required for the post.

From
R. Kalavani, B.Sc.
23, Karameswar Koil St.
Saidapet Chennai – 16 To
The Managing Director Mathew Garments Rameshwaram Road T. Nagar Chennai – 17
Sir,

With reference to your advertisement in The Hindu dated 18.02.19, I wish to apply for the post of Personal Secretary. I am a Science graduate from Loyola College. I have done my shorthand and P.G. Diploma in Human Resource Management. I can take notes and type in

the computer at a reasonable speed. I have experience of working as a part-time Personal Secretary to Shri Ram Chits Company Manager for a period of three years. I have good working knowledge of English and Tamil. I request you to consider my application favourably and send me a call letter. I assure you, I would execute my job to the best satisfaction of my superiors.

With Regards

Yours Sincerely

R. Kalaivani

To,

The Managing Director

Mathew Garments

Rameshwaram Road, T. Nagar

Chennai – 17

(h) Write a letter the Editor of a newspaper about the nuisance created by the roadside vendors blocking the pavements and occupying the parking zone.

From

M. Kalavathi

24, South Car St

Madurai

To,

The Editor

The Hindu

Chennai – 2

Sir,

Sub: Nuisance of vendors in roads and parking spaces

Many foot path vendors are blocking the pavements and occupying parking areas in South Car St. and the nearby parking areas. All those vendors who eke out a living may be allotted shops elsewhere to curtail this menace. Kindly publish this in your newspapers so that Madurai corporation and the traffic police may take the necessary action.

Yours Sincerely

M. Kalavathy

To,

The Editor

The Hindu

Chennai – 2

(i) Write a letter to your relative or friend who is admitted in hospital for treatment of jaundice. Advise him/her not to worry about the illness and be positive. Assure him/her of your

psychological and financial help during the crisis.

Dear Mala,

Received the letter informing me of your ailment. Jaundice can be cured by herbs very quickly without serious side effects. Sirukurinjan Thalai is a remarkable herb which would expedite the cure. In case you have already started the treatment, don't worry, if you need money, I will transfer it to your account by NEFT or I can transfer it from my Paytm App.' Drink only boiled water. Avoid oily and spicy food items. You must take fruit juices to recover completely. Don't worry, I'm there for you. Get well soon.

With love KuralMathi

To,

Mala

Meenakshi Nagar

Madurai

Two Gentlemen of Verona About The Author



Archibald Joseph Cronin (1896-1981) was a Scottish novelist, dramatist and physician. A.J. Cronin was a doctor by profession and a writer by accident. While recovering from an illness, he started writing his first novel "Hatter's Castle" and instantly became popular. Many of his stories have emerged from his medical career and are noted for their narrative skill, deep social conscience and finely drawn characters. Cronin's books were not only bestsellers but some of them were made into successful films and were adapted for radio and television. His novella Country Doctor was adapted for a long running BBC radio and TV series. Drawing inspiration from an early play of Shakespeare, he wrote "Two Gentlemen of Verona".

Two Gentlemen of Verona Summary in English

Introduction

'Two Gentlemen of Verona' is the story of two young boys, Nicola and Jacopo. The story recounts how the two brothers devoted themselves to a hard and difficult life to earn money for the medical treatment of their sister. She was afflicted with tuberculosis of the spine. The author was impressed by their sincerity and devotion to the cause. They displayed maturity and understanding beyond their years. Their selfless action 'brought a

new nobility to human life and gave promise of a greater hope for human society’.

Nicola and Jacopo – the fruit vendors

Two young boys stopped the narrator on the outskirts of Verona. They were selling wild strawberries. The elder brother Nicola was thirteen while the younger brother Jacopo was nearly twelve. Both were in rags. He was strangely attracted towards them. The earnestness in their eyes touched the narrator. He bought their biggest basket in spite of Luigi’s (his driver) protests.

Doing odd jobs



Next morning, the narrator saw both the brothers bending over shoeshine boxes in the public square. They were doing a brisk business. They not only picked up fruits but also did many other things to earn a living. Often they showed visitors round the town-to Juliet’s tomb and other places of interest. They proved extremely useful to the narrator and his driver Luigi. They could buy a pack of American cigarettes or get seats for the opera. They could be relied upon to satisfy their needs. They shined shoes, sold fruits and hawked newspapers, took tourists round the city and did all odd jobs for others to earn money.

Working till late night



One night, the narrator saw both the brothers resting on the stone pavement. Jacopo's head was resting upon his elder brother's shoulders. He was asleep. It was nearly midnight. Nicola told them that they were waiting for the last bus from Padua. They could sell all their papers when the bus came in there. The narrator thought that they must earn quite a lot. They worked so hard and ate so little. They spent nothing on their clothes. The narrator thought that perhaps they were saving up to emigrate to America. But they had other plans.

A rare privilege

The author was to leave Verona on Monday. He asked the brothers if he could do anything for them before leaving. Jacopo told that every Sunday they made a visit to the country to Poleta, 30 kilometers from there. Usually they hired bicycles to go there. He asked the narrator if he could send them there in his car. Luigi had taken the Sunday off but the narrator replied that he would drive them out himself. The following afternoon they drove to a tiny village. The two brothers came out of the car and went towards a red-roofed villa. They promised to be back within an hour.

Unravelling Mystery

The narrator found a grilled slide entrance. He determinedly rang the bell. A pleasant-looking young woman appeared in the white uniform of a trained nurse. She led him into the hospital. She stopped at the door of a little cubicle. She asked him to look through the glass partition. The two brothers were seated at the bedside of a girl of about twenty. She resembled her brothers. She was listening to their chatter. The nurse asked the narrator to go in. Lucia would be pleased to see him. The narrator did not want to intrude upon that happy family party. He begged the nurse to tell him all she knew about those boys.

Family Destroyed by the War

Nicola and Jacopo were quite alone in the world, except their sister Lucia. Their father was a widower. He was a well-known singer and was killed in the early part of the war. A bomb had destroyed their home and they were thrown into the streets. They rebuilt their house using the rubbles. They suffered horribly. They faced starvation and were exposed to the cold winter. They hated the Germans who brought all these troubles on them. The boys served as secret agents and carried messages about movement of German troops to freedom fighters. When the war was over, they came to their beloved sister. They found her suffering from tuberculosis of the spine.

Love for their Sister

The boys did all that they could do for their ill sister. They brought her to the hospital and persuaded them to take her into the hospital. She had made a lot of progress in the last twelve months. It was hoped that one day she would walk and sing again. Lucia's brothers paid weekly bills regularly. The narrator was shocked to know the story of the two boys and their sister. He hurriedly came out and waited until the boys rejoined him. He drove them back to the city. They sat beside him and spoke nothing. Even he didn't say a word to them. He knew they would prefer to feel that they had 'safely kept their secret'. Their devotion, selfless action and sincerity touched his heart deeply. Their devotion to the cause brought a new nobility to human life. They gave a new hope for humanity.

Conclusion

The selfless hardships bravely faced by the two little brothers of Lucia teach us the meaning of life. The story conveys the message that as long as people are willing to make sacrifices for the well-being of others, there is hope for humanity.

Poem

The Castle

Warm Up:

Question (a)

What thoughts come to your mind when or/you think about a castle? Add your ideas to the list.

Answer:

moat, huge buildings, soldiers, weapons gatehouse, look outs.

Question (b)

Have you ever visited a fort or a castle?

Answer:

Yes I have visited the red Fort in Delhi

Question (c)

Fill in the following empty boxes.

Name	Location
Fort St. George	Chennai
Gingee Fort	
Golconda Fort	
Red Fort	

Answer:

Name	Location
Fort St. George	Chennai

Gingee Fort	Villupuram District
Golconda Fort	Hyderabad
Red Fort	Delhi

1. Based on your understanding of the poem, answer the following questions in one or two sentences each.

Question (a)

Who is the narrator in the poem?

Answer:

One of the soldiers lodged in The Castle is the narrator in the poem.

Question (b)

How long had the soldiers been in the castle?

Answer:

The soldiers had been in the castle all through the summer

Question (c)

Why were the soldiers in the castle fearless?

Answer:

The soldiers have plenty of arms and food. So they were fearless in The Castle.

Question (d)

Where were the enemies?

Answer:

Of course yes. There were enemies.

Question (e)

Why does the narrator say that the enemy was no threat at all?

Answer:

The narrator says that the enemy was no threat because their captain was brave and the soldiers were loyal.

Question (f)

Did the soldiers fight with the enemies face to face?

Answer:

No, the soldiers did not fight with their enemies face to face.

Question (g)

Who had let the enemies in?

Answer:

The warder, who guards the wicket gate, let the enemies inside the famous citadel.

Question (h)

How did the enemies enter the castle?

Answer:

The enemies bribed the warder with gold coins. He opened the wicket gate and the castle was captured without bloodshed and fight.

Question (i)

Why were the secret galleries bare?

Answer:

The secret galleries were captured by the enemies. So, they were bare.

Question (f)

What was the 'shameful act'?

Answer:

Being sold to an enemy and losing the castle without a heroic fight is a 'shameful act'.

Question (k)

Why didn't the narrator want to tell the tale to anybody?

Answer:

Since the defeat of The Castle was treacherous but not by a face to face war, the narrator didn't want to tell the tale to anybody.

Question (l)

Why did the narrator feel helpless?

Answer:

The narrator felt helpless because they could not fight gold. The greed for gold is an invisible and internal enemy and they had no weapon to fight it with. So, they felt helpless.

Question (m)

Who was the real enemy?

Answer:

The gold which was got as a bribe by the warder was the real enemy.

2. Read the poem again and complete the summary using the words given in box.

Stanzas 1-3

half-a-kilometre	watching	castle
brave	ration	capture
plenty	confident	

The Castle ' by Edwin Muir is a moving poem on the (1) ____ of a well-guarded (2) ____ The soldiers of the castle were totally stress-free and relaxed. They were (3) ____ of their castle's physical strength. Through the turrets, they were able to watch the mowers and no enemy was found up to the distance of (4) ____ and so they seemed no threat to the castle. They had (5) ____ of weapons to protect them and a large quantity of (6) ____ in stock to take care of the well-being of the soldiers inside the castle. The soldiers stood one above the other on the towering (7) ____ to shoot the enemy at sight. They believed that the castle was absolutely safe because their captain was (8) ____ and the soldiers were loyal.

Answers

1. capture
2. castle
3. confident
4. half-a-kilometer
5. plenty
6. ration
7. watching
8. brave

Stanzas 4-6

lamented	shameful	wicked guard	bait
let	gold	gold	weapon

weapon	citadel	weak	weak
disloyalty	helpless	enemy	enemy

Even by a trick, no one but the birds could enter. The enemy could not use a (9) _____ for their entry inside the castle. But there was a wicket gate guarded by a (10) _____. He (11) _____ in the enemies' confidence inside the famous citadel that had been known for its secret gallery and intricate path. The strong castle became (12) _____ and thin because of the greedy disloyal warder. The (13) _____ was captured by the enemies for (14) _____. The narrator (15) _____ over the (16) _____ of the useless warder and also decided not to disclose this (17) _____ story to anyone. He was (18) _____ and wondered how he would keep this truth to himself. He regretted not finding any (19) _____ to fight with the (20) _____ called 'gold'.

Answer:

9. weapon
10. wicked guard
11. let
12. weak
13. citadel
14. gold
15. lamented
16. disloyalty
17. shameful
18. helpless
19. enemy
20. bait

3. Read the poem and answer the following in a short paragraph of 8-10 sentences each.

Question (a)

How safe was the castle? How was it conquered?

Answer:

The castle was fortified by a deep moat very difficult for an enemy to cross. They had a stockpile of arms. Their captain was brave and the soldiers loyal. They had a huge stock of foodgrains to last any siege of the castle. Allies were ready to pitch in at a short notice. From the turret wall, soldiers were ready to shoot down the enemy at sight. Not a single enemy was spotted all through the summer. The soldiers were relaxed and spent time gazing at the mowers in the distant fields. But the castle's wicket gate was guarded by an aged greedy gatekeeper. The warder collected gold from the enemy and let the enemies in.

Their enemy was gold against which they had no weapon. Their castle fell to the greed of an aged warder.

Question (b)

Bring out the contrasting picture of the castle as depicted in stanzas 3 and 5.

Answer:

The gates of the castle were very strong. The walls were high and smooth. No enemy could ever enter it by trick. The soldiers were quite alert to the movement of the enemies. They were proud that only a bird could venture to scale over the castle. But the enemies entered through the wicket gate. The tunneled stone walls became thin and treacherous. The famous citadel ' was overthrown without a fight. The cunning enemies, having bribed the aged warder, looted the treasures in the secret galleries. The citadel was lost without a fight and a groan of protest.

Question (c)

Human greed led to the mighty fall of the citadel. Explain.

Answer:

The loyal soldiers and their brave captain expected enemies from outside the castle. Their arms and army were ready to fight them. But they could not identify the enemy within. The soldiers were proud that no might would tear their castle down. But they were unaware of the • invisible soul-dead enemy within. The ingredients of personal downfall went unnoticed by them. If a person never looks within, the faults that can be their doom go overlooked. Their reality could crumble while they gaze outward and pride themselves on their sureness. This is what happened precisely with the soldiers of the castle. They only focused on the strength of their physical surroundings and what was beyond the castle. Human greed-propelled betrayal from within caused the castle's downfall.

Additional Questions

Question (a)

Why did the narrator say that their "only enemy was gold"?

Answer:

The narrator was very proud of the awe-inspiring castle. The soldiers were least bothered about the enemy who was just half a mile away. They had a well-guarded, tall, smooth, and insurmountable fort. They were led by a brave captain. The soldiers were loyal and ready to lay down their lives for protecting the castle and the trusting citizens of their country. There was constant vigil from the turret wall to shoot down the enemy at sight. They were proud that only a bird could have the temerity to scale over the fortified castle. They were even prepared for a siege as they had well-stocked granaries. In the event of the outbreak of war, allies were ready to rush with their assured forces in support of them.

But the soldiers were unaware of the truth, "the strength of the strongest chain lies in its weakest link". An aged warder of a wicked wicket gate had a cancerous growth of greed. As

the enemy was hidden within the soul of their own city, they had no weapon to fight it. Gold was ultimately their enemy. Jesus Christ was betrayed for “thirteen pieces of silver by his own disciple”. Similarly, the wicked gatekeeper betrayed his country for a bag full of gold. The great citadel fell without even a groan of protest and without shedding “a jot of blood.”

Appreciate The Poem

4. Read the given lines and answer the questions that follow in a line or two.

(a) “All through the summer at ease, we lay,
And daily from the turret wall
We watched the mowers in the hay”

Question (i)

Who does ‘we’ refer to?

Answer:

“We” refers to the brave and loyal soldiers in the castle.

Question (ii)

How did the soldiers spend the summer days?

Answer:

They spent the summer days gazing out of the castle. They were ready to shoot the enemy at sight who were at half-a kilometer distance. But none came near. So, they were relaxed.

Question (iii)

What could they watch from the turret wall?

Answer:

They could watch the farmers mowing at a distance from inside their turret walls.

(b) “Our gates were strong, our walls were thick,
So smooth and high, no man could win.”

Question (i)

How safe was the castle?

Answer:

The castle had high and smooth walls. No enemy could think of climbing it as soldiers were ready to shoot the enemy at sight. The moat was deadly and deep.

Question (ii)

What was the firm belief of the soldiers?

Answer:

The soldiers had the firm belief that their castle was invincible. They felt safe and secure behind the castle.

(c) "A foothold there, no clever trick

Could take us dead or quick,

Only a bird could have got in."

Question (i)

What was challenging?

Answer:

Scaling over the castle's smooth and high walls was challenging.

Question (ii)

Which aspect of the castle's strength is conveyed by the above line?

Answer:

The physical strength of the castle (i.e.) its brave and loyal soldiers, the stockpile of arms, and well-stocked granary, is conveyed here.

(d) "Oh then our maze of tunneled stone

Grew thin and treacherous as air.

The castle was lost without a groan,

The famous citadel overthrown

Question (i)

Bring out the contrast in the first two lines.

Answer:

The maze of tunnelled stone walls instead of intriguing the enemies gave passage to them. So, the poet says the secret tunnelled path became thin and treacherous as air.

Question (ii)

What happened to the castle?

Answer:

The castle was captured by the enemies.

(e) "We could do nothing, being sold."

Question (i)

Why couldn't they do anything?

Answer:

The enemies had entered through the wicket gate stealthily and easily occupied their castle.

Question (ii)

Why did they feel helpless?

Answer:

They felt helpless because they had no weapon to fight "Gold" their invisible enemy. Their castle fell due to the unnoticed greed of their warder, an aged man.

Additional Questions

(a) "And the enemy half a mile away
They seemed no threat to us at all "

Question (i)

What were the soldiers expecting?

Answer:

The soldiers were expecting a war.

Question (ii)

Where were the enemies?

Answer:

The enemies were half a mile away.

Question (iii)

Were they afraid? Why?

Answer:

No, they were not afraid because they had a huge army, strong fort, and loyal soldiers.

(b) "For what, we thought, had we to fear
With our arms and provender, load on load,"

Question (i)

What was the mood of the soldiers?

Answer:

The soldiers were confident of winning the war.

Question (ii)

What made the soldiers confident?

Answer:

They had enough grains to survive a siege and plenty of arms to fight the war. These things made them confident.

(c) "What could they offer us for bait?
Our captain was brave and we were true."

Question (i)

What do you mean by bait?

Answer:

Bait means something intended to entice someone to do something usually dishonourable.

Question (ii)

Why did the soldiers believe that they were invincible?

Answer:

The soldiers believed that they were invincible because their captain was brave and they were loyal.

5. Explain the following with reference to the context in about 50-60 words each.

Question (a)

They seemed no threat to us at all.

Answer:

Reference: This line is from Edwin Muir's poem "The Castle".

Context and Explanation: The poet says these words while flaunting the invincibility of their strong castle. They could watch the movement of enemies from the turret wall and shoot down the enemy at a distance of half-a-kilometer. They had a stockpile of arms. Their granary was full to sustain the people in the event of a siege. Only a bird could have got into the castle. So, the enemies did not seem to be a threat at all to the soldiers.

Question (b)

How can this shameful tale be told?

Answer:

Reference: This line is from Edwin Muir's poem "The Castle".

Context and Explanation: The narrator feels disgraced that their strong castle was overtaken without a groan. There was no fight. They were helpless because, under the cover of darkness, they were sold for gold by the aged warder. It was a shameful and treacherous act of betrayal. The castle had fallen due to the greed of an aged warder. The narrator is hesitant to disclose the shameful betrayal to outsiders.

Question (c)

I will maintain until my death

Answer:

Reference: This line is from Edwin Muir's poem "The Castle".

Context and Explanation: The poet says this while recounting the shameful act of betrayal by the aged warder of the wicket gate. The narrator was overconfident of the invincibility

of their castle, their stockpiled arms, and well-stocked granary. They had a brave captain and loyal soldiers. In an open war, they need not fear defeat as their friendly neighbours were also willing to join them during a war against any invader. But their enemy was within their fortified castle. They were sold for a bag of gold. Without a groan, the citadel was captured. It was a shameful way to lose one's side. So, the narrator prefers not to recount this shameful secret to anyone so long as he is alive.

Question (d)

Our only enemy was gold

Answer:

Reference: This line is from Edwin Muir's poem "The Castle".

Context and Explanation: The helpless soldier says this while being surprised by the enemies who bribed the wicked wicket gatekeeper. The soldier was initially proud of their fortified castle, brave and loyal soldiers and a pile of arms, and the well-stocked granary to last a siege. There was vigil behind the turret wall. But he was not aware of the enemy within the human soul: the greed. Gold was their enemy for which they had no weapon. The wizened warder had let the enemy in through the wicket gate by taking "gold". The weakness of the gatekeeper for gold made the strong castle weak.

Additional Questions

Question (a)

Our gates were strong, our walls were thick,

So smooth and high, no man could win

Answer:

Reference: These lines are from Edwin Muir's poem "The Castle".

Context and Explanation: The poet says these words while describing the confidence level of the soldiers about the might of the castle. The gates of the castle were strong. The walls were high and smooth. It appeared very formidable for any enemy to conquer.

Question (b)

A little wicked wicket gate.

The wizened warder let them through.

Answer:

Reference: These lines are from Edwin Muir's poem "The Castle".

Context and Explanation: The poet says these words while describing the circumstances that led to the conquest of the castle without any bloodshed. A greedy aged warden let the enemies in through a little wicket gate.

Question (c)

Oh then our maze of tunneled stone

Grew thin and treacherous as air.

Answer:

Reference: These lines are from Edwin Muir's poem "The Castle".

Context and Explanation: The poet says these words while describing the betrayal of the wizened warden. His betrayal resulted in weakening the tunneled maze into thin walls exposing the treachery and breach of trust by the warder.

Question (d)

The famous citadel has overthrown,
And all its secret galleries bare.

Answer:

Reference: These lines are from Edwin Muir's poem "The Castle".

Context and Explanation: The poet says these words while describing the evil impact of the cunning invasion of the castle. The enemies ransacked the rare treasures of art and culture guarded in secret galleries in the castle.

Question (e)

How can this shameful tale be told?

Answer:

Reference: This line is from Edwin Muir's poem "The Castle".

Context and Explanation: The poet says these words while describing the treacherous betrayal of the aged warden. He had taken gold and let the enemy in. The soldiers who were ready to lay down their lives to protect their castle were shamefully overpowered by the trick of the enemy and the greed of the warder. The soldier is reluctant to relate this shameful tale.

Question (f)

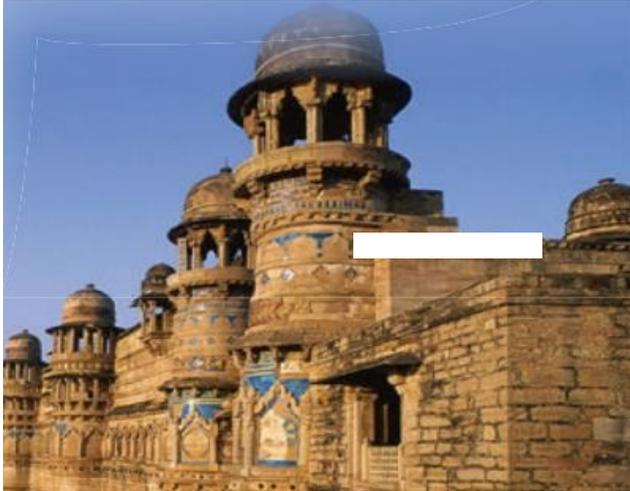
And we had no arms to fight it with.

Answer:

Reference: This line is from Edwin Muir's poem "The Castle".

Context and Explanation: The poet says these words about the helplessness of the soldiers. They were taken by surprise by the enemies at night. The enemies had won them with gold against which they had no weapon. Human greed has destroyed the brave and loyal soldiers and the castle is captured by foes.

6. Read the poem and complete the table with suitable rhyming words



All through that summer at ease, we lay,
And daily from the turret wall
We watched the mowers in the hay
And the enemy half a mile away
They seemed no threat to us at all.

For what, we thought, had we to fear
With our arms and provender, load on load,
Our towering battlements, tier on tier,
And friendly allies drawing near
On every leafy summer road.

Our gates were strong, our walls were thick,
So smooth and high, no man could win
A foothold there, no clever trick
Could take us dead or quick,
Only a bird could have got in.

What could they offer us for bait?
Our captain was brave and we were true...
There was a little private gate,
A little wicked wicket gate.
The wizened warder let them through.

Oh then our maze of tunneled stone
Grew thin and treacherous as air.
The cause was lost without a groan,
The famous citadel overthrew,
And all its secret galleries bare.

How can this shameful tale be told?
I will maintain until my death
We could do nothing, being sold:
Our only enemy was gold,
And we had no arms to fight it with.

lay	hay

Answer:

lay	hay
wall	all
thick	trick
win	in
fear	near
load	road
bait	gate
sold	gold
true	through
stone	groan

air

bare

7. Underline the alliterated words in the following lines.

Question (a)

With our arms and provender, load on load.

Answer:

With our arms and provender, load on load.

Question (b)

A little wicked wicket gate.

Answer:

A little wicked wicket gate.

Question (c)

The wizened warder let them through.

Answer:

The wizened warder let them through.

8. Identify the figure of speech used in the following lines.

Question (a)

A little wicked wicket gate.

Answer:

Personification

Question (b)

Oh then our maze of tunneled stone

Answer:

Metaphor

Question (c)

Grew thin and treacherous as air.

Answer:

Simile

Question (d)

How can this shameful tale be told?

Answer:
Personification

Question (e)
Our only enemy was gold.

Answer:
Personification

Question 9.
Can you call 'The Castle' an allegorical poem? Discuss.

Answer:
The castle is doubtless an allegorical poem. The outward strength of the castle is matchless. It is fortified well. It has brave soldiers and a large quantity of arms are stockpiled. The castle houses a well-stocked granary also. But the castle also conceals the ingredients of personal downfall within. If a person does not look within, their doom may be unstoppable. It is very difficult to protect oneself against greed, particularly the love of gold, instilled deep in the psyche of human beings. People say, "everything is fair in love and war." People resort to anything to win in a war. Gandhi said, "the end never justifies the means." But in times of war people stoop down to any betrayal to win. Thus, the castle is an allegorical poem.

Listening Activity

Following is one of the most celebrated poems of Rupert Brooke. It describes the noble sacrifice of an English soldier.

The Soldier

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam;
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter learned of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Some phrases have been left out in the poem below. Fill in the missing phrases on listening to the reading or the audio played by the teacher. You may listen again if required. Soldier

If I should die, (1)____ That there's some comer (2)____ That is (3)____ There shall be
In that rich earth a richer (4)____ A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware, Gave,
(5)____ roam; A body (6)____ air, Washed (7)____ suns of home. And think, (8)____ away,
A pulse in the (9)____, no less Gives somewhere back (10) given; Her (11)____; dreams
happy as her day; And laughter, (12)____; and gentleness, In hearts (13)____ English
heaven.

Answer:

1. think only this of me
2. of a foreign field
3. forever England
4. dust concealed
5. once, her flowers to love, her ways to
6. of England's breathing English
7. by the rivers, blest by
8. this heart, all evil shed
9. eternal mind
10. the thoughts by England
11. sights and sounds
12. learned of friends
13. at peace, under an

The Castle About the Poet



Edwin Muir (1887-1959), a renowned Scottish poet, novelist, translator, and critic is remembered for his vivid poetry. He began writing poetry at a relatively old age, and over the course of several years worked out an individual, philosophical style for which he gained recognition later in his life. First Poems and Chorus of the Newly Dead contain Muir's initial attempts. Muir's later collections include Variations on a Time Theme, The Narrow Place, The Voyage and Other Poems, The Labyrinth, and One Foot in Eden.

The Castle Summary in English

Edwin Muir's 'The Castle' describes the capture of a castle through the eyes of a helpless soldier who witnessed the fall. Throughout the poem, the poet employs a constant ABAAB rhyme building the confidence of the readers about the strength of the castle and the invincibility of their status in the event of a war. Being confident of the strength of the fort, depth of the moat, and quantum of weapons, access to the allies, readiness to shoot the enemies from the turret walls of the fort, the soldiers were relaxed watching the mowers in the fields at work. There was no doubt about the valour of their captain and the loyalty of the soldiers.

They were confident of the sufficiency of the stockpile of food grains even if the castle came under siege. Citizens slept in peace. The soldiers were proud of the fact that in armed combat they will surely win. But there was a wicket gate guarded by an old man. The enemy bribed the aged gatekeeper and the castle fell into the hands of the enemies. The brave soldiers had no weapon to fight human greed for "gold".

Supplementary

God Sees the Truth, But Waits

Warm Up:

Question 1.

If you are punished for a prank your classmate played, how would you react to the situation?

Answer:

I will not be quick to anger. I will keep quiet and will quietly let my friend know that, I did not relish his act. If he values my friendship, he will certainly apologize. If he doesn't, I will forgive.

Question 2.

While many would seek vengeance or feel sorry for themselves, some may put their trust in God, forgive others for the wrongs done to them and move on in life. What is your take on this? Discuss.

Answer:

I believe anger, self-pity and hatred are negative emotions. Anger is a punishment we give ourselves for others wrong doing. I would not be in a hurry to express my anger or displeasure. I will focus more on the business of living ignoring the pain. If the relationship is really good for me, the person who had hurt me knowingly or unknowingly will come back to me. Otherwise, I will understand that he/she was not destined to be my lifetime friend. So, I will move ahead in life leaving the weight of hurt and disappointment behind.

1. Answer the following Questions in a sentence or two each, based on your understanding of the story.

Question (a)

Why did Aksionov's wife stop him from going to the fair?

Answer:

Aksionov's wife stopped him from going to the fair because she had a bad dream about him.

Question (b)

What is the importance of Aksionov's wife's dream?

Answer:

She had dreamt that he had returned from the town. When he took off his cap, she saw that his hair was quite grey. This was a bad omen.

Question (c)

What made Aksionov leave the inn before dawn?

Answer:

Aksionov left the inn before dawn because he was wishing to travel while it was still cool.

Question (d)

What were the circumstances that led to Aksionov's imprisonment?

Answer:

Aksionov had left the inn at the dawn. He was intercepted by the police. A blood-stained knife was found in his bag. So, the police arrested him accusing him of murdering the merchant who stayed in the same inn where he had stayed.

Question (e)

Why did Aksionov give up sending petitions?

Answer:

Aksionov gave up sending petitions because his wife already said that the petitions had not been accepted. That is why he gave up all hope and only prayed to god.

Question (f)

Why didn't Makar disclose that he had killed the merchant?

Answer:

Makar's disclosure would have given the police the chance to arrest him and convict him. So, he did not disclose his guilt.

Question (g)

Did Makar feel guilty when he heard Aksionov's story?

Answer:

Yes, Makar felt guilty when he heard the story of Aksionov.

Question (h)

What made Aksionov think that Makar was the real murderer?

Answer:

Makar asked who could put the knife in Aksionov's bag when it was kept under his head. This made Aksionov understand that it was Makar who had killed the merchant.

Question (i)

What was Aksionov's realization by the end of the story?

Answer:

Aksionov realizes that as a man-made justice is imperfect and it is not his place to report Makar Semyonich to the authorities for his escape attempt. Aksionov himself is a victim of manmade justice.

Question (j)

Why did Aksionov's wife suspect him of involvement in the murder?

Answer:

Mrs. Aksionov had dreamt that her husband's hair had turned grey on his return from the fair. As Aksionov used to drink occasionally, she suspected that her husband may have killed the merchant in a drunken brawl which also correlates with the dream she had the same morning.

Additional Questions

Question (a)

What is the story "God sees the truth but waits" about?

Answer:

This story is about faith, forgiveness, freedom and acceptance of a suffering young merchant named Aksionov. He was sent to prison for a murder he had not committed. He spent 26 years in prison in Siberia before he could discover the murderer. After discovery, though pained, he forgave him. He died on the day the pardon was granted.

Question (b)

Write briefly about the early life of Aksionov.

Answer:

Aksionov was a handsome, fair, haired, curly-headed fellow. He was full of fun in his youth. He was very fond of singing. He used to drink in excess and enter into brawls. But after marriage, he became sober.

Question (c)

Why did Aksionov doubt his wife's statement about a bad dream?

Answer:

Aksionov did not believe in his wife's dream. He thought his wife must have been afraid that he might go on a spree after reaching the fair.

Question (d)

What prompted Aksionov to ask Semyonich if he knew anything about the merchant Aksionov of Vladimir?

Answer:

Aksionov heard one of the convicts say that he is from Vladimir. He did not know what happened to his family in the last 26 years. So, he asked him about his family.

Question (e)

What information was consoling to Aksionov?

Answer:

The information that Aksionov's are now rich was consoling to Aksionov.

Question (f)

Why did Aksionov become angry and restless after meeting Semyonich?

Answer:

Aksionov got convinced that it was Semyonich who had murdered the merchant and kept the blood-stained knife in his bag. So, he longed for vengeance. He kept praying but could not find peace. He was really restless.

Question (g)

What circumstances made Semyonich threaten to kill Aksionov?

Answer:

Semyonich was digging out a hole to escape from jail one night. Aksionov happened to see it ' accidentally. Fearing exposure, Semyonich threatened to kill Aksionov.

Question (h)

How did Aksionov react to the threat of Semyonich?

Answer:

He said that Semyonich need not kill him as he had already done so long ago. He may tell about his bid to escape or may not. He would do as God directed him.

Question (i)

What was the Governor's opinion of Aksionov in the Siberian Jail?

Answer:

The Governor of the Siberian jail believed that Aksionov was a truthful old man.

Question (j)

Why did the prisoners respect Aksionov?

Answer:

Aksionov's fellow prisoners respected him and called him "grandfather" and "The Saint". When they wanted to petition to the prison authorities about anything, Aksionov was their spokesman. He settled their quarrels too in a just manner.

Question (k)

What thoughts prevented Aksionov from exposing Semyonich who had ruined his life?

Answer:

Aksionov knew if he tells the authorities, they would probably flog the life out of Semyonich. Besides what good will come out of getting him punished. Let him pay for his sins himself.

Question (l)

Why was Semyonich left unpunished for trying to escape from the jail?

Answer:

Nobody else dared to expose him. Aksionov found no point in doing so. As there was no evidence to nail him, Semyonich went unpunished.

Question (m)

What unexpected thing happened at night?

Answer:

Semyonich knelt before Aksionov and asked for his forgiveness and offered to confess his crime of murdering the merchant.

Question (n)

What made Aksionov feel that the belated confession of Semyonich and his own release would be futile?

Answer:

Aksionov had spent the best part of his life (i.e.) 26 years in Siberia. His wife was dead and children had forgotten him. He had nowhere to go. So, Aksionov felt that the confession of Semyonich would be futile.

2. Answer the following Questions in three or four sentences each.

Question (a)

Did the police officer have sufficient evidence to convict Aksionov?

Answer:

Yes, the police officer has sufficient evidence to convict Aksionov. Because the merchant with whom he spent last night has been found with his throat cut, and a blood-stained knife has been taken from Aksionov's bag.

Question (b)

What impact did the book "The Lives of Saints" have on Aksionov?

Answer:

Aksionov read "The lives of saints" when there was enough light in the prison. He became a religious person. He sang in the choir. He was resigned to his fate. The fellow prisoners realized that he was innocent and unjustly condemned and hence respected him. They called him grandfather.

Question (c)

Pick out the clues that convey that Makar Semyonich recognized Aksionov.

Answer:

Makar Semyonich recognized Aksionov when Aksionov asked him about the merchants family in Vladimir whether they were still alive or not and it was also told to the new comer-how Aksionov came to be in Siberia; how some one had killed a merchant and had put the knife in Aksionov's things. From these two pieces of information, Makar Semyonich recognized Aksionov.

3. Answer the following Questions in a paragraph of about 150 words each.

Question (a)

Compare and contrast the main characters, Aksionov and Makar Semyonich, in the story.

Answer:

Aksionov, a handsome man, full of life, enjoyed the music. He loved his family and did an honest business. He is innocent to the core. The very sight of a blood-stained knife found in his bag sends a chill down his spine. He is deeply sensitive. When he realizes that his wife too suspected him, he gives up petitioning the Tsar for mercy. He recognized Makar Semyonich the person who had murdered the merchant and had him framed in murder charges and unjustly punished for twenty-six long years. When an opportunity presents to wreak vengeance on him, he keeps quiet. He does not show any interest in his belated freedom and restoration of justice. He seeks refuge in God.

Makar Semyonich is a cold-blooded murderer and scoundrel. Knowingly, he hides the blood-stained knife in Aksionov's bag and tips off the police. He doesn't confess his guilt on the day he meets Aksionov. It is only when he realizes that Aksionov is a noble soul and does not want to expose his plan to escape from the prison that he changes his attitude to Aksionov. He is haunted by guilt that he had wronged a noble soul. He confesses but it is in vain. The pardon arrives but Aksionov passes away in prison before release.

Question (b)

How did Aksionov react when his wife suspected him?

Answer:

Aksionov had a deep love for his wife. He wanted to petition the Tsar for clemency. But his wife said that the petition already sent had been rejected. She asked, "Vanya dearest, tell your wife the truth; was it not you who did it?" It was too much to bear for Aksionov. He was devastated. He buried his face in his hands and sobbed. When he recalled what his wife had said, he was shocked. He said to himself, "It seems that only God can know the truth; it is to Him alone we must appeal, and from Him alone expect mercy." He gave up all hope. He only prayed to God.

Question (c)

Describe the life of Aksionov in prison.

Answer:

His hair turned white as snow and his beard grew long, thin, and grey. He walked slowly, spoke little and never laughed, and often prayed. In prison, Aksionov learned to make boots, and earned a little money, with which he bought "The lives of the saints". He read this book when he had time enough in the prison and on Sundays in the prison church, he read the lessons and sang in the choir. The prison authorities liked Aksionov for his weakness and his fellow-prisoners respected him and called him "grandfather" and "The Saint" thus Aksionov spent his life in prison peacefully.

Question (d)

Why did Aksionov decide not to reveal the truth about Makar Semyonich?

Answer:

Aksionov was quite aware of the gravity of the offense done by Makar Semyonich. He had tried to make a hole in the prison compound wall and escape. Aksionov found this out accidentally. Makar warned him that he would kill him if he testified against him. Initially, the anger welled up in his heart demanding revenge for the 26 years of prison life. But slowly he made up his mind to keep quiet and let God punish him for the crimes he had committed. He thought, "why should I screen him who ruined my life?" When **Questioned** by the Governor, he kept quiet. He knew deep at heart, if he disclosed the truth, they will flog the life out of him.

Question (e)

Discuss the meaning and importance of the saying "God sees the truth but waits".

Answer:

Ivan is tongue-tied when the police find a knife in his bag. The moral shock he undergoes as an innocent victim of circumstances allows him to have faith in injustice. But the moment his wife expresses her suspicion over his involvement in the murder, he loses all hopes. It is then that he starts believing in God and divine justice. Tsar can't give him freedom. His judgment is based on evidence given by crooked people.

God need not be given any pieces of evidence of innocence. He knows the truth but his mills of justice grind very slowly. Ivan loses interest in escaping or leaving the prison. He had no one to go back to. At this juncture, Semyonich confesses his guilt of murdering the merchant. When the pardon arrives as a cruel joke, Ivan is dead. So, 'God knows the truth but waits' is the most appropriate title for this story.

Question (f)

Forgiveness is the best form of revenge. Substantiate the statement with reference to the story.

Answer:

"On God sees the truth, but waits", by Leo Tolstoy We have the theme of guilt, faith, conflict, forgiveness, freedom, and acceptance. The reader realizes after reading the story that Tolstoy may be exploring the theme of forgiveness. Despite the fact that Aksionov has spent twenty-six years in prison for a crime he did not commit, he is able to forgive the man who did commit the crime.

According to Leo Tolstoy, if a person has faith in God no matter how difficult things maybe for them, they will be able to forgive another human being for any action taken against them. For instance, Action knows that Semyonich killed the merchant but he never reports him to the authorities. He knows that after twenty-six years in prison he has nothing to live for. Moreover, when Aksionov heard him sobbing, he too began to weep, said "God will forgive you". Aksionov no longer had any desire to leave the prison, but only hoped for his last hour to come. In spite of what Aksionov had said, Makar Semyonich confessed his guilt and repeatedly asks for forgiveness.

Additional Questions

Question (a)

What were the nostalgic reminiscences that disturbed Aksionov once he discovered the real murderer of the merchant?

Answer:

Soon after discovering the fact that it was Semyonich who had murdered the merchant, he became terribly unhappy. A kaleidoscope of images of his own past life flooded his mind. In his mind's eye, he saw the youthful image of his lovely wife. Her face and eyes rose before him. He heard her speak and laugh. He saw his little children, one with his little cloak on suckling at his mother's breast. Then he remembered his own merry-go-lucky life in his youth.

He vividly remembered how happy he was playing the guitar at the inn without any worry. He remembered how he was arrested, flogged in the presence of his villagers. He recalled how shamefully he was chained and convicted. He remembered how he had to spend twenty-six long years in Siberia and attain premature old age. He felt so wretched that he wanted to take away his own life.

Question (b)

Describe the circumstances leading to Semyonich threatening Aksionov in Siberia?

Answer:

One night, unable to sleep, Aksionov was walking inside the prison. He noticed that soil came out rolling from one of the shelves on which prisoners slept. He found Makar Semyonich creep out of the spot. He looked up at Aksionov with dread. Aksionov ignored him and started ' walking ahead. Driven by guilt and fear of exposure, Semyonich ran and caught hold of Aksionov's hand. He explained how he had dug a hole with his heavy boots to escape from jail. He warned him not to blab. If he did, the authorities will flog the life out of him.

But he would kill him first. He offered the bait that Aksionov also could escape. Aksionov drew his hand away and said he had no desire to escape. He said that Semyonich had already killed him long ago. He added that he may or may not tell about him as per the direction of God.

Question (c)

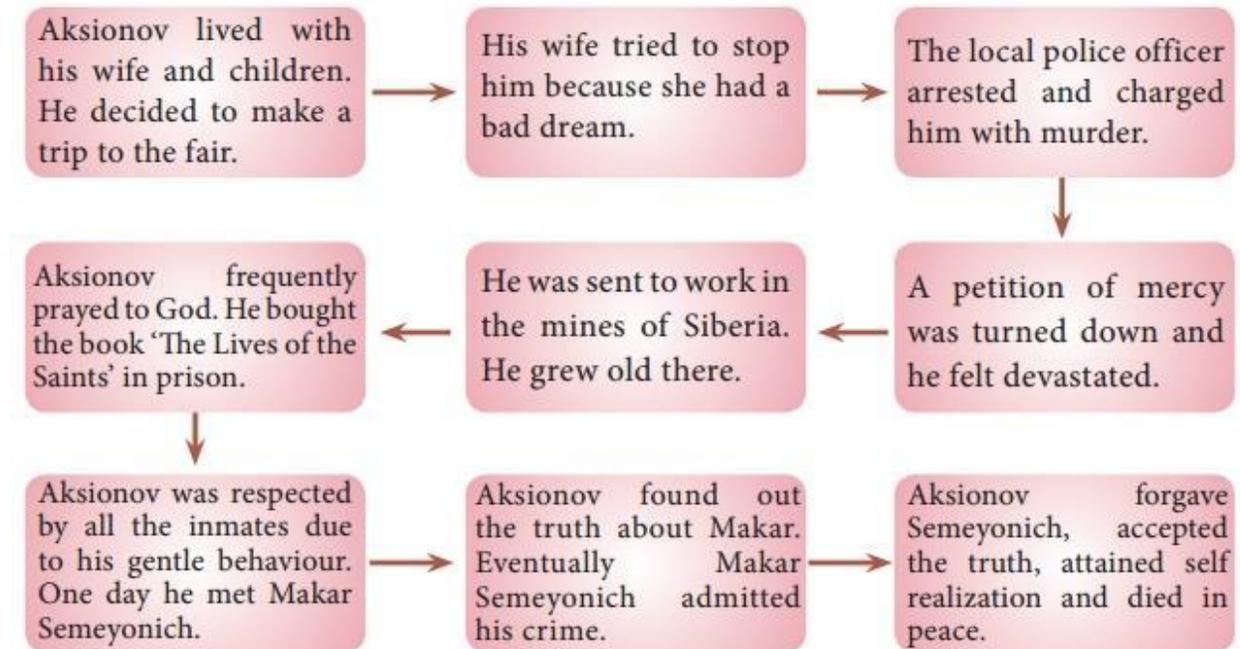
Why was the Governor forced to seek the witness of Aksionov?

Answer:

Aksionov was meek. He was respected by fellow prisoners. The prison authorities also believed that the religious old man must have been unjustly punished. They knew Aksionov never told lies. The prison authorities found out that someone had been digging the prison shelf to escape. They doubted that newcomer Semyonich could be the culprit. But they could not nail him on the grounds of suspicion alone.

All the prisoners were summoned and enquired including Semyonich. All denied any knowledge of it. Those who knew kept quiet because they knew Semyonich will get flogged if someone betrayed him. As no one was ready to tell the truth, the Governor, who had enormous trust in the nobility and honesty of Aksionov asked him to tell the truth. But Aksionov preferred to stay quiet.

4. Using the mind map given below, write a brief summary of the story in your own words.

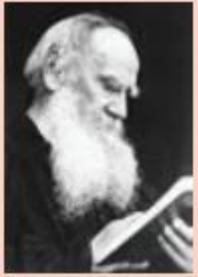


Aksionov was a businessman. He lived with his wife and children. He was full of life. He sang and played the Guitar and occasionally drank too. Once he got ready to go to the fair. His wife tried to stop him saying that she had a bad dream. On his return from the fair, his hair had turned grey. It was ominous. But Ivan ignored his wife's warning and went to the fair. As he liked cool weather, he left the inn early. He was intercepted by the police who searched his belongings. Finding a blood-stained knife in his bag, he was arrested on charges of murder. His wife's petition for clemency to the Tsar was turned down. His wife's unwillingness to trust him was more devastating than Tsar's rejection of mercy petition. He was flogged. After the wounds healed he was sent to work in the mines of Siberia.

Staying 26 years in Siberia he grew a long beard. He became a grandfather to the prisoners. He read "The lives of saints" and was found praying and singing in the choir. He was respected both by the fellow prisoners and the jail authorities for his gentle behaviour. Everyone in jail believed in his innocence and unjust condemnation. One day a new convict namely Makar Semyonich came there. When Makar blurted out how the knife went to his bag kept under his head, Ivan recognized Makar as the real murderer of the merchant. Ivan had a chance to expose Makar to the jail authorities. But he kept quiet. Makar became

remorseful and asked Ivan's forgiveness. He forgave him. Makar confessed to the authorities. The order of pardon came but then Ivan was dead.

God Sees the Truth, But Waits About The Author



Leo Tolstoy was born on September 9, 1828, in Tula Province, Russia. He is best known for the novels *War and Peace* (1869) and *Anna Karenina* (1877), often cited as pinnacles of realist fiction. He first achieved literary acclaim in his twenties with his semi-autobiographical trilogy, *Childhood, Boyhood, and Youth* and *Sevastopol Sketches*, based upon his experiences in the Crimean War. Tolstoy's fiction includes dozens of short stories and several novellas such as *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* (1886), *Family Happiness*, and *Hadji Murad*. He also wrote plays and numerous philosophical essays. Tolstoy died on November 20, 1910, in Astapovo, Russia.

God Sees the Truth, But Waits Summary in English

Introduction

In "God sees the truth but waits" the author's deep-seated faith in God and moral values is expressed

Innocent man charged with murder



In Vladimir, a young, attractive businessman named Ivan Dmitrich Aksionov lived with his wife and children. Although in his youth, he had given in to drinking and living a carefree life, he had now settled down and lived a responsible, productive life. One day he decided to make a trip to a fair where he could sell some of his merchandise. His wife objected to his

trip saying that she had a bad dream about this trip. Aksionov ignored her apprehension and proceeded. On the way, he stopped at an inn, where he met another merchant he knew.

They stayed at the inn in rooms next to one another. Being an early bird, he proceeded at dawn. After traveling twenty-five miles, however, he was intercepted by a local police officer. He **Questioned** him closely about the time he had spent at the inn. He claimed that the other merchant had been found with his throat slit. Aksionov seemed a likely suspect since he knew the man and since they shared neighbouring rooms. Aksionov vehemently denied any involvement in the murder. However, when his bag was searched, a blood-stained knife was found.

Circumstantial evidence

Although Aksionov protested claiming innocence, he was arrested and charged with the murder. Even his wife wondered if he might have been involved since the circumstantial evidence was so convincing. A petition to the Czar for clemency was turned down. Aksionov bade his wife and young children farewell, reflecting that only God can know the truth, he waited. As Aksionov's wife also suspected him, he stopped petitioning to Tar. After being severely flogged, he was sent to work in the mines in Siberia. During his twenty-six years of imprisonment there, his hair had turned grey. His cheerful personality disappeared, and his body began to weaken. He never showed any signs of happiness and frequently prayed to God.

Faith lessens sorrow

While imprisoned, he became a bootmaker. He earned enough money to buy a book called *The Lives of the Saints*. He read this book whenever there was light. On Sundays, he took a prominent role in the religious services and sang in the choir of the prison church. The wardens and guards appreciated his humility. Other prisoners regarded him with respect, calling him "Grandfather" and "The Saint." He became their representative when they needed to deal with the authorities. They trusted him so much that they treated him as a kind of judge, who could settle disputes and disagreements amongst them. Meanwhile, he had no information about his family nor any contact with them. He thought that they might all be dead, for all he knew.

Reviving old wounds – a new discovery



When a new shipment of prisoners arrived one day, Aksionov eventually realized that one of the men, Makar Semyonich, was from his own home town. In response to Aksionov's **Questions**, Makar informed the old man that Aksionov's family was prosperous. Makar seemed to know Aksionov somehow, leading the latter to wonder if Makar knew, anything about the murder of the merchant. Makar's reply led Aksionov to begin to suspect that it was Makar who had in fact committed the crime.

Tormented by painful memories and by a sense of all the years he had lost, he eventually accused Makar, privately, of having murdered the merchant. Makar ignored the accusation even though Aksionov had caught Makar trying to dig a tunnel to escape the prison. Aksionov could easily have reported this deed to the authorities. But he chose to keep quiet, even after Makar threatened him with death. When the tunnel was eventually discovered, no one would identify Makar as the culprit who had been doing the digging. Governor believed Aksionov will not tell lies, who was closely questioned by him. He denied knowing who had been digging. He did not want to see Makar harshly punished. He even started wondering if he had wrongly suspected Makar of murdering the merchant.

Transformation of a criminal

Later that night, Makar came to Aksionov's bed and begged the old man for forgiveness. He confessed that he had indeed killed the merchant and had hidden the blood-stained knife in Aksionov's bags. He offered to confess to this crime so that Aksionov could be released from prison and go back to his home and family. Makar continued to beg Aksionov for forgiveness, especially since Aksionov had not revealed what he knew about Makar and the tunnel. Both men were soon weeping, and Aksionov said "God will forgive you! Maybe I am a hundred times worse than you." Having said this, he suddenly felt a load leave him. He no longer cared about leaving the prison. He only desired death. Makar did eventually confess to having killed the merchant. Ironically, by the time Aksionov's pardon arrived, he was already dead.

Conclusion



The story's essence is that forgiveness is the best sort of revenge in life. The hardcore criminal Makar Semyonich undergoes a spiritual transformation because Aksionov had

forgiven him in spite of unjust suffering for 26 years. In the end, Aksionov gets peace of mind. It is only after he forgave Makar that he enjoyed the serenity and was able to die in peace.